

STATEMENT OF NEED FOR THE BILL

The Washington State Board of Pilotage Commissioners licenses and regulates marine pilots who navigate large container ships, oil tankers and other vessels calling at the ports of Puget Sound and Grays Harbor. During the 2005 Legislative Session, RCW 88.16.118 was amended for purposes of expanding the current law concerning limited liability of state-licensed pilots. Two versions of this legislation were enacted (Chapter 26 and Chapter 123, Laws of 2005 Pilotage Act); one was requested by the Board of Pilotage Commissioners as agency request legislation and the other by the Port of Grays Harbor. The intent of the legislation was to extend limited liability to pilot trainees in the Puget Sound and Grays Harbor Pilotage Districts as well as the port district located in Grays Harbor who hires or contracts with pilots and pilot trainees. The Code Reviser attempted to merge the two sections but found just enough difference in the language of the two versions that moved it beyond their statutory authority to make a technical correction. It is at their suggestion that this housekeeping measure be put forward as agency request legislation in order to ensure that limited liability be extended beyond just the pilot so that it will also include the Port of Grays Harbor and pilot trainees in both pilotage districts. The amendments that are proposed are in no way intended to change any substantive portions of the statute and will leave the pilots and the port district in the intended position.